

Reference Number: 533-01-DD

Title of Document: Admission of DMR Clients to DMH
Facilities - Procedures for Referral
of Individuals to the South Carolina
Protection & Advocacy System

Date of Issue: October 26, 1988
Effective Date: October 26, 1988
Last Review Date: April 17, 1991
Date of Last Revision: April 17, 1991

Applicability: DMR Regional Centers

Purpose

This document establishes procedures for the automatic referral to the South Carolina Protection and Advocacy System of any individual in a DMR Regional Center (including a DMR operated community residence) who is transferred for inpatient treatment services to the South Carolina Department of Mental Health.

This referral is in keeping with the Memorandum of Agreement with DMH for DMR Clients in Need of Mental Health Hospitalization and in cooperation with the P&A System in implementing its Protection and Advocacy of Mentally Ill Individuals (PAMI) Program.

Authority of P&A System

The Protection and Advocacy for the Mentally Ill Act of 1986 requires that each state establish and operate a protection and advocacy system for individuals with mental illness that will protect and advocate the rights of such persons and investigate incidents of abuse and neglect of these individuals. The South Carolina Protection and Advocacy System is the designated agency in South Carolina to implement the Act and to establish a program for the Protection and Advocacy of Mentally Ill Individuals.

Procedures for Referral to P&A System

The following procedures will be used when an individual is transferred to the S.C. Department of Mental Health for inpatient treatment services.

1. The facility director or his designee will verbally notify the SCDMR Office of Client Advocacy as soon as possible, but no later than the next business day when the individual residing in a Regional Center or DMR operated community residence has been admitted to a facility of the S.C. Department of Mental Health.

2. The referral shall include the following information:

- a. name, age, and functional level of individual being referred
- b. date of transfer and facility/location
- c. type of admission (voluntary or emergency commitment)
- d. presenting problem(s) or condition(s)
- e. any previous admission(s) for mental health treatment
- f. name and address of parent/guardian if adjudicated incompetent or is under the age of eighteen
- g. name and telephone number of DMR staff contact person (social worker, QMRP, etc.)
- h. additional information may be supplied as necessary

3. The DMR Client Advocate upon verbal notification of a DMH admission will immediately notify the P&A System - PAMI Program.

4. The facility director or his designee will also notify the Regional Commissioner and the Regional P&A Advocate of the admission to DMH. The parents/guardian of the individual should also be notified that a referral has been made and that the P&A System will monitor the individual.

5. If an individual is admitted to DMH under emergency admission procedures, then a copy of the admission/transfer papers should also be sent to the DMR Client Advocate who will forward a copy to the P&A System - PAMI Program.

6. The DMR Client Advocate will maintain a log of all DMR admissions to a DMH facility.

7. The facility director or his designee shall also notify the DMR Client Advocate when an individual is readmitted to DMR or is officially discharged to DMH.

Procedures of the P&A System - PAMI Program

1. Upon notification that an individual receiving services from DMR has been admitted to a DMH facility, an Advocate from the P&A System - PAMI Program will visit the individual within one week of admission. The PAMI Advocate will also meet with the DMH social worker or designated staff person to obtain an update on the individual and inform the DMH social worker that a PAMI Advocate will be calling regularly for an update or status report.

2. The PAMI Advocate will contact the individual and request that the individual sign a Release of Information form and Authorization to Act form so that the PAMI Advocate may become involved in the case. If the individual has been adjudicated incompetent or is under the age of eighteen, then the parents or legal guardian will be contacted. Upon involvement in a case, the PAMI Advocate will monitor the individual and may:

- a. request that a PAMI Advocate be included in development of individual's service plan and/or participate in the individual's discharge staffing
- b. request notification of probate hearing (if applicable)
- c. request notification of individual's transfer to any other DMH facility

3. DMR and DMH staff are encouraged to maintain appropriate contacts with each other on the status of the individual including any concerns noted. The PAMI Advocate will also monitor the individual and if there are any continuing concerns that cannot be resolved with DMH, the PAMI Advocate will notify the DMR Client Advocate who will alert the following staff: DMR Regional Commissioner, facility director, and DMR Deputy Commissioner for Client Services.

4. When an individual is ready for discharge, the PAMI Advocate will participate in the discharge planning meeting. The PAMI Advocate will also notify the P&A Regional Office of the planned discharge.

5. When an individual is discharged back to DMR, the PAMI Advocate will review the case to determine if additional monitorship is required. The Regional P&A Advocate may continue to monitor the individual.

Community Clients

Local programs and County Mental Retardation Boards are encouraged to make direct referrals to the P&A System - PAMI Program whenever a person with mental retardation is admitted to a DMH facility.

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Services of the P&A System - PAMI Program are available to any individual in a facility rendering mental health care/treatment or to any individual who has been discharged from such a facility within 90 days. By statute, the PAMI Program is authorized to intervene or investigate whenever there is probable cause to believe that abuse or neglect may have occurred to any individual covered under the Act.

Judy E. Johnson, Ed.D.
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(Originator)

Philip S. Massey, Ph.D.
Commissioner

(Approved)